

Volunteers receive as much as they give in service

By Carol Statton
Correspondent

The heart and soul of a community is beautifully revealed through the people who commit their time to become volunteers.

Sisters Habitat for Humanity offers many opportunities to become a part of something that truly changes lives. Every person can make a difference and utilize their unique skills and experience. No matter the age, a place and purpose awaits each new volunteer; a place, purpose and an untold number of new friends.

When moving to a new town, some find it hard to get connected. Seniors, relocating to be near family, can find it especially challenging to get integrated. Individuals spending extended time here from other countries may find themselves looking for a deeper cultural experience. Young adults trying to discover their capabilities and value may seek alternatives from the usual path. Even long-time residents can find themselves turning a corner and needing something new, something meaningful. All who hunger for connection, friendship and a new way to give back can find opportunities through volunteering.

Josie Newport, Thrift Store manager and volunteer coordinator, knows that the time her volunteers give is precious and priceless. Many of those working here also serve elsewhere. When asked about any possible limitations there might be, such as age or physical conditions, Josie feels confident that they have a place for everyone hoping to become a part of the team. Within the Habitat for Humanity family, managers and staff are dedicated to making possibilities real.

To step behind the scenes and witness staff preparing each donation with care, it is quickly apparent that each individual is fulfilled by their special contribution to a very worthy cause. With varied backgrounds and giftings, the tasks at hand are taken care of... and the tasks at hand are numerous because of the overwhelming generosity of this community. Volunteers also have the opportunity to donate their accrued hours to Habitat for Humanity for the purpose of securing grant money, or to the homeowner, who has to have 500 "sweat equity" labor hours invested in their future home. The time each volunteer so generously gives truly contributes to the success of the organization,

as well as partners with those working toward receiving their new home.

Opportunities expanded this year when the Thrift Store relocated to a new and much larger location downtown. With new visibility for those traveling on Cascade Avenue, the store is seeing a significant increase of customers daily. On average, there have been approximately 275 people per day walking through the doors of this beautiful new space. With donations increasing and more customers excitedly looking for fun treasures, there has never been a greater need for those willing to help.

Between the Thrift Store, ReStore, and the staff



PHOTO BY CAROL STATTON

Thrift Store volunteers sort donated clothing for sale.

dedicated to building new homes, volunteer opportunities abound.



PHOTO BY CAROL STATTON

Gayla Nelson enjoys her gig as a Habitat for Humanity volunteer.

Habitat for Humanity has been a vital part of the Sisters community since 1991. The Thrift Store opened in 1993 and ReStore opened in 2007. To date, 66 homes have been completed, changing the lives of those families significantly — and changing the lives of each of the volunteers who have been crucial to making this possible.

Community takes on new meaning when working together to value, affirm and care for people. It is truly a reflection of the heart when great efforts and commitment produce such unbelievable results. Habitat for Humanity has empowered hopeful homeowners, donors, managers, volunteers and customers to become a part of this

beautiful interwoven tapestry of support. It is an incredible example of meeting the needs of others; building not only houses but fostering special relationships and renewed sense of purpose as well.

For more information about volunteer opportunities, contact Josie Newport at 541-549-1740.

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